

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

1. An absorbent core having a crotch region, wherein (i) the crotch region has an absorbent capacity of not more than about 40% of the absorbent core's total absorbent capacity, and wherein (ii) the absorbent core comprises at least one removable absorbent core component and at least one non-removable absorbent component.

2. The absorbent core of Claim 1 wherein the crotch region retains from 0% to about 10% of the core's total capacity.

3. The absorbent core of Claim 1 wherein the removable absorbent core component comprises at least one storage/redistribution member.

4. The absorbent core of Claim 3 wherein the storage/redistribution member is made from fibrous material, open-celled polymeric foam material, absorbent gelling material, or combinations thereof.

5. The absorbent core of Claim 4 wherein the absorbent gelling material is included at a concentration of from about 60% to about 100% by weight.

6. The absorbent core of Claim 5 wherein the absorbent gelling material has a Saline Flow Conductivity value of at least about $30 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sec/g}$.

7. The absorbent core of Claim 5 wherein the absorbent gelling material has a Performance Under Pressure capacity value of at least 23 g/g under a confining pressure of about 0.7 psi.

8. The absorbent core of Claim 5 wherein the absorbent gelling material has a gel volume of at least about 20 g/g.

9. The absorbent core of Claim 3 wherein the removable absorbent core component can be replaced by a replacement absorbent core component having the same structure as the component which was removed.

10. The absorbent core of Claim 1 wherein the non-removable absorbent core component comprises at least one acquisition/distribution member.

11. The absorbent core of Claim 10 wherein the acquisition/distribution member is made from fibrous material, open-celled polymeric foam material, absorbent gelling material, or combinations thereof.

12. The absorbent core of Claim 11 wherein the acquisition/distribution member exhibits a 30-minute Vertical Wicking Height of at least about 5 cm.

13. The absorbent core of Claim 11 wherein the open-celled polymeric foam material has a specific surface area per foam volume value of at least about 0.025 m²/cc.

14. The absorbent core of Claim 1 wherein the crotch region further comprises a material having a crotch cross sectional area at the absorbent core's crotch point of not more than about 2.6 cm².

15. The absorbent core of Claim 14 wherein the crotch cross sectional area at the absorbent core's crotch point is not more than about 1 cm².

16. An absorbent article comprising the absorbent core of Claim 1.

17. The absorbent article of Claim 16 wherein the absorbent article comprises access means for providing access to the at least one removable absorbent core component through an opening in the article so that the at least one removable absorbent core component may be removed from the absorbent article through the opening without having to remove the absorbent article from a wearer.

18. The absorbent article of Claim 17 wherein the access means provide access to at least one removable absorbent core component through an opening in the article's backsheet, topsheet, waist regions, or combinations thereof.

19. The absorbent article of Claim 17 wherein the access means provide access to the at least one removable absorbent core component through a pocket formed between the topsheet and backsheet portions of the article.

20. The absorbent article of Claim 17 wherein the access means provide access to the at least one removable absorbent core component through an envelope formed between a substantially fluid impervious layer and a substantially fluid pervious layer of the article.